M/s. GE Canada. The leading Canadian manufacturers, after negotiations by the Price Negotiating Committee appointed by the Government of India. All other equipments were purchased by the usual tendering process from Canadian firms. No specific irregularity has been reported in the procurement of these equipments.

[Translation]

Supply of Sleepers

2613. JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA :
SHRI NITISH KUMAR :
PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have formulated a policy for purchasing of PSC and Steel Turnout sleepers for future requirements of the railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have now taken a decision to change old steel and cement sleepers by reversing its earlier policy decision;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether life of concrete sleepers is five times more than that of the wooden sleepers;

(f) whether orders for concrete turnout have been placed with nine firms @ Rs. 70,000/- (including HTS wire) per set when the infrastructure capability available with the manufactures of concrete sleepers in the country is only for 1000 sets per month;

(g) whether the orders have also been placed for the supply of 4,500 wooden turnouts @ 1,80,000 per set costing Rs. 100 crores when its life span is substantially less than the concrete sleepers; and

(h) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) As per present policy as far as possible only concrete turnout sleepers sets are being used on Indian Railways.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The estimated life of Concrete sleepers is about 30-40 years whereas avarage life of wooden sleepers is 10-12 years.

(f) Orders for 8000 sets of Concrete turnout sleepers have been placed on 8 firms at the rate of Rs. 49,999/- (+Rs. 8400/- MODVAT) per set and 1000 sets of concrete turnout sleepers on one firm at the rate of Rs. 47,635/- (+Rs. 8400/- MODVAT) per set. The rates are excluding cost of HTS Wire. The above quantity is to be supplied in five years.

(g) and (h) No, Sir. Proceedings have been completed for placement of the concracts for supply of Sal Wooden Special Sleepers on following Govt. Corporations :

	In cums.	Rs. in crores
1. MMTC (A Corporation of UOI	43,000	81.28
2. MARCOFED (A Corporation of Govt. of Nagaland).	9,000	16.61
Total	52,000	97,89

The above ordered quantity of wooden sleepers includes the following types of sleepers:-

1. Sleepers for Bridges.
2. Sleepers for Diamond Kings and Spl. layouts.
3. Sleepers for Lines in Bombay Sub-urban section.
4. Sleepers for Rail Joints
5. Sleepers for Turnout.

The use of wooden sleepers on bridges, at diamond crossing and special layouts, in Lines at Bombay Sub-urban section, at Rail Joints etc. is unavoidable as use of other types of sleepers including concrete sleepers there, is technically not feasible. Wooden turnout sleepers are to be used mostly for maintenance of about 52000 sets of wooden turnouts sleepers presently laid in the Tracks.

[English]

Shortage of Funds for Doordarshan

2614. SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has approached the Ministry of Finance for extra funds to save Doordarshan from resource crunch; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to avoid shortage of funds for Doordarshan?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) and (b) The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has approached the Ministry of Finance to agree to phasing out of the Non-Lapsable Fund (NLF) support to Non-Plan expenditure so that adequate provision is available for Plan funding of Doordarshan.